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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (10/02): Palestinians believe the international community needs to remain strong against Israeli positions

Main Stories:

News on the US-Iranian talks in Geneva receives front page coverage in the local dailies. The reports quote President Obama calling the first official meeting between the US and Iranian officials in more than 30 years "constructive," but urged Iran to follow this with tangible actions on the ground. In related news, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida posts a report citing Reuters that the Israeli government will reconsider its policy on Iran in light of yesterday's meeting.

The local press highlights news on the national reconciliation efforts. Jibril Al-Rjoub, Vice Secretary of the Palestinian Liberation Organization Central Committee, noted that Egypt will extend invitations to Fatah, Hamas and the other Palestinian factions for the reconciliation agreement signing ceremony scheduled for October 22. The report notes that Egypt will revise their plan based on the Palestinian factions' feedback, finalizing it this week.

News on the release of 20 Palestinian female prisoners from Israeli jails today also receives prominent coverage in the dailies. The reports note that the Palestinian Authority (PA) Minister of Prisoners Affairs Issa Qarage' will welcome the released prisoners at the Ofer checkpoint in Ramallah. The reports also note that the Israeli Supreme Court rejected an appeal by an extremist Jewish organization to stop the release.

Al-Ayyam carries front pages news quoting PA presidency spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeina saying that the gap between the Palestinian and Israeli positions is huge. Abu Rudeina also noted that any more delays to end the conflict will result in negative consequences for

the entire region.

Israeli reactions to the Goldstone report still receive prominent coverage in the Palestinian press. The reports quote Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urging the UN not to refer the report to the Security Council, saying that this step would have negative implications on the peace process.

The dailies report that the Israeli authorities have imposed a strict closure on the West Bank starting October 1 in observance of the Jewish holiday Succoth. The closure will remain in effect until October 10.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Al-Quds Editorial states under the title "The Arab and International Silence towards Israeli Stubbornness" (10/02): "Modern history has not witnessed a similar case where a state occupies the land of another people and continues its occupation for more than four decades ... Obama, the EU, Russia and all the powers that believe in justice and peace should stand courageously to achieve it. The Palestinians who chose peace as a way to achieve their goals expect more from the Arab states and the international community than just statements and remarks that don't change Israeli positions."

2) Sameeh Shbeeb opines in Al Ayyam independent daily under the headline "Negotiations and Settlements" (10/02): "The Palestinians are disappointed. After fighting a battle to halt

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settlement activities as a necessary condition to return to negotiations, they [Palestinians] believe that the American retreat has weakened their position in a clear political battle ... what happened in the battle to halt settlement activities is a repeat of the previous American administrations that started out opposing Israeli policies, but at the end of the day changed to agree with the Israeli positions."

RUBINSTEIN